



AMERICA'S
PrepareAthon!SM
BE SMART. TAKE PART. PREPARE.

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

MATERIALS FOR YOUR OUTREACH AND PROMOTION

AUGUST 2014



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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations! By participating in America's PrepareAthon!, your organization is taking an important step toward preparing for disasters.

Now that you've settled on a day of action, your PrepareAthon! Day, you can bring attention to your efforts and gain support from the broader community by spreading the word.

We know you're busy. That's why we're providing you with messaging and background information, as well as the social media tips and tools listed below. These materials are designed to save you time and make your outreach easier before and during your PrepareAthon! Day.

RESOURCE MATERIALS	SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS
Overview of America's PrepareAthon!	Social Media Engagement
Key Messages, Background, and Research Findings	10 Tips for an Effective Tweet Chat
Talking Points	Sample Tweets
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	Sample Facebook Posts
PrepareAthon! Day Announcement Template	Sample Blog Post Template

Whether your organization is planning to hold an event, drill, or other activity promoting tornado, hurricane, flood, wildfire, earthquake, or winter storm preparedness, customize these materials to promote your efforts and participate in America's PrepareAthon!

You can also refer to the Media Event Planning Guide, which is a companion piece designed to help you and your team promote and publicize your America's PrepareAthon! drill, activity, or event. This document, available at www.ready.gov/prepare, will walk you through the basics of media planning, outreach to stakeholders, and promotion.

OVERVIEW OF AMERICA'S PREPAREATHON!

America's PrepareAthon! is a national, grassroots campaign for action to increase community preparedness and resilience through hazard-specific drills, group discussions, and exercises. Throughout the year, America's PrepareAthon! helps communities and individuals across the country to practice preparedness actions before a disaster or emergency strikes.

Twice a year, a national day of action, National PrepareAthon! Day, focuses attention to the importance of creating a more resilient Nation by bringing stakeholders, communities, and individuals together to take action and join the conversation on resilience. In the fall, National PrepareAthon! Day takes place on September 30th to complement and support National Preparedness Month.

Goal

Increase the number of individuals who:

- Understand which disasters could happen in their community;
- Know what to do to be safe and mitigate damage;
- Take action to increase their preparedness; and



- Participate in community resilience planning.

Resources Available on www.ready.gov/prepare

- How to Prepare: This hazard-specific guide provides information on the basics for a range of hazards, how to protect yourself and your property, and what steps to take now.
- Prepare Your Organization Playbooks tailored to each hazard: These materials are designed to provide community leaders and employers with tools and resources to support participation.
- Fact sheets, background information, customizable promotional materials, and fill-in-the-blank template outreach materials: These resources encourage participation and promote involvement.

Research-Based Approach

- Delivers information through trusted community members.
- Makes real change possible through experiential learning.
- Promotes peer-to-peer discussions within and across community networks.
- Builds on existing campaigns, including state and local awareness campaigns, the Great ShakeOut, and the *Ready Campaign*.

Measuring Our Progress

- Number of participants
- Increased knowledge of local hazards
- Learned and practiced protective actions
- Increased understanding of community plans/resources

KEY MESSAGES, BACKGROUND, AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

Key Messages and Background

- Disasters can strike anywhere and anytime. National Preparedness Month—observed every September—serves as a reminder that everyone must take action to prepare for the types of emergencies that can affect each of us.
- This year, the theme for National Preparedness Month is “Be Disaster Aware, Take Action to Prepare.” In support of this theme, FEMA’s *Ready Campaign* will highlight specific actions that citizens can take to prepare for an emergency. These include the four building blocks of emergency preparedness —being informed, making a plan, building a kit, and getting involved. Each week in September, the campaign will focus on a different area of preparedness.
- National Preparedness Month provides an important opportunity to raise public awareness about the importance of national resiliency by engaging citizens through a wide variety of strategic partnerships and collaboration.
- Twice a year, on April 30 and September 30, the campaign promotes national days of action, National PrepareAthon! Days to bring attention to our progress toward creating a more resilient nation. The September National PrepareAthon! Day culminates National Preparedness Month, held every September.
- America’s PrepareAthon! is a national, year-round, grassroots campaign.
- America’s PrepareAthon! works to build a more resilient nation by increasing the number of individuals who understand which disasters could happen in their community, know what to do to be safe and mitigate damage, take action to increase their preparedness, and participate in community resilience planning.



- To learn more about America's PrepareAthon! and how you can play a role in your community's preparedness, visit www.ready.gov/prepare for fact sheets, guidance, promotional materials, and an events calendar to help plan your activities in support of America's PrepareAthon!

Research Findings

Disaster Facts

- Extreme weather events have increased in frequency in the past 50 years and are expected to become even more common, more intense, and more costly.¹
- Between 1900 and 2014, the United States experienced 38 earthquakes, 166 floods, and 568 storms (including tropical cyclones).²
- In 2012, the United States was struck by 936 tornadoes, causing about \$1.6 billion in damages.³
- In 2013, there were more than 440 weather-related fatalities and nearly 2,800 injuries.⁴

The Cost of Being Unprepared

- In 2013, deadly weather caused more than \$8 billion in property damage.⁵
- According to the Insurance Information Institute, an estimated 25 percent of all businesses affected by a major disaster never reopen.⁶
- Failure to prepare for extreme weather events has cost the United States \$1.15 trillion in economic losses from 1980 to 2010 and could cost another trillion dollars in coming years.⁷

Key Survey Research Findings

America's PrepareAthon! is a research-based campaign.

- Despite an increase in weather-related disasters, only 39 percent of respondents have developed and discussed an emergency plan with their household.⁸
- A recent report by the National Academies found that annual Federal spending on disasters jumped from \$20.9 million in 1953 to a staggering \$1.4 billion in 2009.⁹ This spending increase comes at a time when many individuals believe there is an increased chance of a disaster affecting them in the future, yet most people still remain unprepared for them.¹⁰
- Groups of people who most Americans would presume to be more prepared for a disaster, such as health care workers, are not prepared at home for a disaster. A study of U.S. health care workers found that 75 percent were either "minimally prepared" or "not prepared."¹¹
- A 2011 FEMA study on disaster and earthquake preparedness recommended that a focus be placed on outreach efforts that are "locally relevant and hazard-specific."¹²
- Drills, exercises, and trainings are key tools that help the brain acquire skills that enable individuals to better overcome shock and support crisis response.¹³
- An increase in awareness of the disasters most relevant to their community is shown to prompt people to take preparedness actions.¹⁴
- Collective action promotes and provides opportunities for peer-to-peer discussions within and across community networks. Peer-to-peer discussions about disaster preparedness have been shown to be linked to motivation to the act.¹⁵
- Community members such as businesses, schools, local governments, faith-based organizations, and community-based organizations working together better ensure that communities are able to build capacity in education, engagement, and self-sufficiency to survive on their own following a disaster, before outside help is able to arrive.¹⁶



- The workplace, schools, and volunteer organizations that support community preparedness, safety, or emergency response are effective channels for preparedness outreach.¹⁷

TALKING POINTS

- Emergencies can happen at any time and place, but practicing what to do in advance of an emergency makes you better prepared to handle any emergency you may encounter.
- Being prepared for disasters is a shared responsibility. It takes the whole community—all of us—working together to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from the destructive forces of nature and other emergencies and disasters.
- A recent FEMA survey found that nearly 70 percent of respondents have not practiced what to do in a disaster by participating in a disaster preparedness exercise or drill (aside from a fire drill) at work, school, or home in the past two years.¹⁸
- When people prepare and practice for an emergency in advance of the event, it makes a real difference in their ability to take immediate and informed action, which, in turn, enables them to recover more quickly. Participation in drills, exercises, and trainings helps to establish brain patterns that support quick and effective action during an emergency.
- Sponsored by the *Ready Campaign*, National Preparedness Month is promoting “Be Disaster Aware, Take Action to Prepare” as its theme.
- National Preparedness Month culminates with National PrepareAthon! Day on September 30, when the nation will bring attention to our progress toward creating a more resilient nation.
- The America’s PrepareAthon! campaign calls on workplaces, schools, houses of worship, community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, and individuals and families to take action to get and stay prepared and provides preparedness guides and resources to support discussions, hold drills, and to conduct exercises to be better prepared and build resilience.
- Cities and counties across the country are planning community-wide events for America’s PrepareAthon!, bringing together schools, the business community, city government, faith leaders, hospitals, individuals and families, and others to participate in community-wide preparedness drills and activities for hazards that are relevant to their area.
- America’s PrepareAthon! provides instructions for preparedness discussions, simple drills, and exercises for a range of disasters that will help people:
 - Understand which disasters could happen in their community;
 - Know what to do to be safe and mitigate damage;
 - Take action to increase their preparedness; and
 - Participate in community resilience planning.
- America’s PrepareAthon! is coordinated by FEMA in collaboration with Federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations at all levels.
- The America’s PrepareAthon! campaign encourages individuals, organizations, emergency managers, first responders, and communities to take action and practice simple steps to increase preparedness throughout the year.
- The campaign offers individuals, organizations, and communities free resources for discussing and practicing safety measures, and easy, low-cost actions to improve resilience for specific disasters.



Examples of Sector-Specific Talking Points

Workplace-Specific Talking Points

- Twice a year, your business has an opportunity to join other businesses in workplace drills and exercises that can strengthen your company and its workforce against disasters.
- America's PrepareAthon! provides step-by-step instructions on drills and activities that are easy to implement. America's PrepareAthon! resources can help businesses assess their continuity of operations plan and develop a corrective action plan for identified gaps.
- The continuity of commerce and community services is a cornerstone of community resilience.
- Participation in America's PrepareAthon! will help reduce a disaster's devastating effects, including injury and disability, financial loss, loss of life, and property damage.

School-Specific Talking Points

- Children comprise approximately 25 percent of our Nation's population and they play an important role in disaster preparedness.
- America's youth are effective messengers to reach and influence parents, adults, and peers.
- Youth who are trained in preparedness are more resilient in actual disasters.
- Ensuring that school children are safe is an essential component of community preparedness.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Q1: What is America's PrepareAthon?

A1: America's PrepareAthon! is a grassroots campaign for action to increase community emergency preparedness and resilience through hazard-specific drills, group discussions, and exercises. Throughout the year, America's PrepareAthon! helps communities and individuals across the country to practice preparedness actions before a disaster or emergency strikes.

Q2: What is the goal of America's PrepareAthon?

A2: The goal of America's PrepareAthon! is simple: Build a more resilient Nation by increasing the number of individuals who understand which disasters could happen in their community, know what to do to be safe and mitigate damage, take action to increase their preparedness, and participate in community resilience planning.

Q3: What kinds of disasters will America's PrepareAthon! help me prepare for?

A3: America's PrepareAthon! has materials that will help you prepare for tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, wildfires, earthquakes, and winter storms. Resources about preparing for additional hazards will be added in the future.

Q4: Can we practice for any type of hazard?

A4: Yes. While America's PrepareAthon! currently has materials for six hazards, your local emergency management agency may have additional resources for the other hazards your community may face. The most important things are to start discussing how you will protect yourself if a disaster strikes and to make any necessary changes to better prepare yourself and those you care about.

**Q5: What resources are available and how do I find them?**

A5: The campaign provides participation guides with information on how to prepare for tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, wildfires, earthquakes, and winter storms. In addition, the campaign provides customizable promotional materials and easy to use outreach materials to drive participation and promote involvement. Everything can be found at www.ready.gov/prepare.

Q6: Who can participate?

A6: Everyone! America's PrepareAthon! calls on the whole community to take action. Organizations such as workplaces, schools, houses of worship, community-based organizations, institutions of higher education, and individuals and families need to take action to get and stay prepared.

Q7: How do individuals and organizations participate?

A7: Participation in America's PrepareAthon! is simple. Individuals and organizations can host their own activity or join with others already holding PrepareAthon! activities. To find activities in your area, go to www.ready.gov/prepare and access the events calendar. To register, participants should go to www.ready.gov/prepare and join the growing number of individuals who recognize that preparing for disasters is a shared responsibility. Participants can view information and download resources such as how-to-prepare guides, implementation guides, and promotional materials.

Q8: How do communities participate?

A8: Community leaders, emergency managers, and Citizen Corps Councils are bringing together key stakeholders in their communities to participate in a community-wide drill or exercise to improve their residents' overall resilience and disaster preparedness. Schools, local businesses, houses of worship, hospitals, and civic organizations can join forces to conduct a community-wide drill or activity so that everyone across the community is better prepared.

Q9: How does my participation count?

A9: America's PrepareAthon! activities must be registered in order to be counted. The America's PrepareAthon! website, www.ready.gov/prepare, shows the cumulative number of participants who are taking action to prepare throughout the calendar year.

Q10: I already promote preparedness in my organization or community. Can those activities be a part of America's PrepareAthon?

A10: America's PrepareAthon! is specifically about taking action. As long as your activity includes active learning, practicing, and evaluating your preparedness, you are encouraged to register and be counted.

**Q11: Does my activity or event need to be called PrepareAthon?**

A11: While this is not a requirement, connecting your preparedness efforts to the national America's PrepareAthon! campaign allows you to leverage national messaging and ensures you are counted with others around the country who are contributing to our progress toward building a more resilient Nation.

Connecting to the America's PrepareAthon! campaign can be as simple as mentioning America's PrepareAthon! in messaging, putting the logo on a website, and/or using PrepareAthon! in the title of an event. Logo Usage Guidelines, which inform participants on how to use and customize the brand, are available at www.ready.gov/prepare.

Q12: Can I customize America's PrepareAthon! materials for my own campaign?

A12: Yes! Organizations and communities can either use the America's PrepareAthon! brand or customize the logo to build their own campaign and to promote greater participation (e.g., Acme's PrepareAthon! or Coastal County's PrepareAthon! for Hurricane Safety). Guidelines for using the logo and promotional materials are available at www.ready.gov/prepare.

Q13: When can I participate in America's PrepareAthon?

A13: Participation in America's PrepareAthon! can take place anytime throughout the year, whenever is most convenient or practical for the communities, organizations, and families taking part.

Q14: What is the National PrepareAthon! Day?

A14: National PrepareAthon! Days take place every April 30 and September 30, and are the two days every year when the national campaign will focus on increasing registrations and expanding media coverage to celebrate the preparedness drills and activities happening around the country. The September National PrepareAthon! Day culminates National Preparedness Month, held every September.

Q15: What is the connection between America's PrepareAthon! and the Great ShakeOut earthquake drill?

A15: America's PrepareAthon! promotes earthquake safety in coordination with the Great ShakeOut. Participants who register for the Great ShakeOut will automatically be counted as part of America's PrepareAthon! Please visit www.shakeout.org for more information.

Q16: Is there recognition for participating?

A16: Yes. First, please take a few minutes to register your participation at www.ready.gov/prepare. Once registered, you can download a certificate of participation.

Q17: How will America's PrepareAthon! be promoted?

A17: Promotional efforts for America's PrepareAthon! include working with national and local organizations that support this active approach to preparedness. The campaign will also use earned and social media to focus attention and encourage a national conversation on the importance of taking action to be prepared. Visit



www.ready.gov/prepare to download customizable promotional materials and fill-in-the-blank media templates that you can tailor for your own promotional efforts. We encourage you to use the web banners, web badges, and digital invites, and to join the online Twitter conversation through @PrepareAthon and #PrepareAthon

Q18: How does America's PrepareAthon! tie in with National Preparedness Month?

A18: National Preparedness Month culminates with the fall National PrepareAthon! Day on September 30. The theme for the 2014 National Preparedness Month is "Be Disaster Aware, Take Action to Prepare," with weekly areas of focus building to the National PrepareAthon! Day.

Q19: How does America's PrepareAthon! work with the *Ready Campaign*?

A19: The *Ready Campaign* promotes four universal building blocks of preparedness—Be Informed, Make a Plan, Build a Kit, and Get Involved—and numerous campaigns around the country have raised awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters. America's PrepareAthon! builds on this awareness to motivate action—and encourages individuals and organizations to take simple, specific actions to increase their preparedness for a potential local disaster. America's PrepareAthon! provides action-oriented guidance for individuals and organizations to practice the necessary steps to stay safe during a disaster or emergency; learn about mitigation measures; and understand community plans, including alerts and warnings, evacuation, and sheltering.

Q20: What is the National Preparedness Community?

A20: The National Preparedness Community is an online community of people who view preparedness as a shared responsibility. After signing up and creating a password account, members collaborate in online discussions with peers from different "communities of practice," join regional groups, participate in national preparedness discussions, and get updates from FEMA and emergency management personnel. The community is open and free to anyone who wishes to join. When you register for America's PrepareAthon! and create your password, you automatically become part of the National Preparedness Community and can participate in all available on-line discussions.

Q21: How does an existing National Preparedness Community member register his or her participation in the America's PrepareAthon! campaign?

A21: Existing community members can use their password to login and complete the America's PrepareAthon! registration questions.



FACT SHEET

Get the Facts

- Between 1900 and 2014, the United States experienced 38 earthquakes, 568 storms, and 166 floods.¹⁹
- In 2012, the United States was struck by 936 tornadoes, causing about \$1.6 billion in damages.²⁰
- In 2013, there were more than 440 weather-related fatalities and nearly 2,800 injuries.²¹

The Cost of Being Unprepared

- In 2013, deadly weather caused more than \$8 billion in property damage.²²
- According to the Insurance Information Institute, an estimated 25 percent of all businesses affected by a major disaster never reopen.²³
- Failing to prepare for extreme weather events has cost the United States \$1.15 trillion in economic losses from 1980 to 2010, and could cost another trillion in coming years.²⁴
- Investments in weather preparation cost local governments significantly less than recovery. Preparedness strategies include flood proofing, flood evacuation plans, elevating buildings, purchasing insurance, and improving drainage codes, and floodplain standards.²⁵

Real Solutions

Where do you stand when it comes to preparedness? Research shows that people are more prepared for a disaster if they:

- Are aware of community alerts and warning systems;
- Talk about their preparedness plan with family and others;
- Attend trainings and meetings; and
- Participate in a drill or exercise.

Increase Your Family's Protection

Based on the 2012 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Survey, 54 percent of the U.S. population do not believe their community will experience a natural disaster.²⁶ Only 39 percent have a plan they have discussed with their family members, and almost 50 percent do not have supplies set aside in their home for use in a disaster. Unfortunately, a disaster will likely impact you at some point in your life, and when it does, you may only have seconds to respond. Your family, friends, and community are depending on you if a disaster happens. Are you ready to act?

You can be! As with any skill, practice makes perfect. Practicing preparedness actions is no exception. By learning the right actions and taking time to practice them, you, your family, and your community can be ready to respond.

Awareness to Action

The goal of America's PrepareAthon! is to enhance national preparedness by increasing the number of individuals who understand which disasters could happen in their community, know what to do to be safe and mitigate damage, take action to increase their preparedness, and participate in community resilience planning. Join millions of Americans in practicing the steps necessary to stay safe before, during, and after a disaster!



America's PrepareAthon! builds on the *Ready Campaign* and awareness campaigns by providing action-oriented guidance and tools that will help whole communities to increase preparedness for local hazards.

Plan to Participate

- Learn how to protect yourself from the types of disasters most likely to affect your community.
- Work with others in your community and plan a community day of action.
- Spread the word about America's PrepareAthon! within your community.
- Get information about your local disaster risks.
- Hold preparedness conversations with your community, family, friends, and colleagues.

Get Involved

To learn more about America's PrepareAthon!, visit us at www.ready.gov/prepare.

Twitter handle: @PrepareAthon

Email: PrepareAthon@fema.dhs.gov



PREPAREATHON! DAY ANNOUNCEMENT TEMPLATE

This announcement template can be tailored and distributed in newsletters, bulletins, email communiqués, and so forth.

[NAME OF ORGANIZATION] Wants YOU to Be Better Prepared for Disasters!

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's 2012 National Survey, 46 percent of respondents believed that a natural disaster will occur in their community; however, nearly 70 percent of Americans have not participated in a preparedness drill or exercise in their home, school, or workplace in the past two years.

As a proud supporter of America's PrepareAthon!, [NAME OF ORGANIZATION] wants to share important information that will help you and your family be better prepared in case of a disaster.

America's PrepareAthon! is a national, grassroots campaign for action to increase individual and community preparedness and resilience through hazard-specific drills, group discussions, and exercises for hazards relevant to their area. At [NAME OF ORGANIZATION], our goal is to help you:

- Understand which disasters could happen in your community;
- Know what to do to be safe and mitigate damage;
- Practice drills and share information to better prepare your employees, affiliates, and the communities you serve; and
- Participate in community resilience planning.

To reach these goals, we at [NAME OF ORGANIZATION] will:

1. [LIST ANY NEW PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS AND PROVIDE RELEVANT START DATES]
2. [DESCRIBE EXISTING PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS THAT YOUR ORGANIZATION WILL CONTINUE TO CONDUCT]

[NAME OF ORGANIZATION] encourages all of you to visit www.ready.gov/prepare to learn more about America's PrepareAthon! and how you can improve your preparedness plan for your family and your community.

If you have any questions about our efforts, please contact [ORGANIZATION POINT-OF-CONTACT NAME FOR PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS].



SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Studies show that people who take specific actions to prepare for disasters ahead of time, such as participating in drills or building an emergency supply kit, respond to and recover from disasters more quickly. Taking action is contagious! When others see you preparing, it encourages them to do the same.

You can use your social media channels to promote, document, and start a conversation about your America's PrepareAthon! activities. Spread the word through Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and other social media sites and blogs to show your commitment to safety. It's also a great way to encourage your co-workers, customers, friends, family, and community to participate.

Strategies and ideas about how to promote your event using social media are included below. You'll also find tips on holding an effective Twitter chat, as well as sample Tweets, Facebook posts, and blog language that you can quickly use via your channels.

Getting Started

- Tell your social media followers to register for America's PrepareAthon! at www.ready.gov/prepare.
- Start the conversation several weeks before your America's PrepareAthon! event. Promote the details of the event, as well as actions your audience can take.
- Respond to questions and share your goals for disaster preparedness.
- Add images and videos to your messages that highlight your event or tell a story. Images can be moving and more engaging than words.
- Encourage your followers to use images on social media sites like Instagram and Twitter and use the #PrepareAthon hashtag with images to show what preparedness actions they are taking. People can get inspired, motivated, and see how easy an action is to do if their social influencers show them how.
- Create a "Preparedness Action" board on Pinterest and tell your followers to do the same. This Pinterest board could include pins of emergency preparedness tips and photos of preparedness in action to help people get better prepared.

Building Your Network

- Build your network of supporters and followers, and follow influential voices on Twitter, such as FEMA Administrator [Craig Fugate](#). Post to LinkedIn groups you belong to that focus on preparedness.
- Ask for responses from others by asking open-ended questions. For example, "The best way for me to prepare for a disaster is _____. What's yours?"
- Thank new followers and those who participate in your event.
- Tailor your messages so they are relevant to local stakeholders and reflect local disaster risks.

Maintaining Interest

- Share information about emergency preparedness at least once a month to keep the dialogue fresh. Try focusing your content around themes throughout the year; for example, you could promote preparedness information and America's PrepareAthon! activities during hurricane season.
- End each message with a simple call to action. For example, "Join me in a preparedness activity and register for America's PrepareAthon! today."
- Post interesting preparedness facts and stories about preparedness hazards facing your community. Share them on Trivia Tuesdays, Wisdom Wednesdays, and Throwback Thursdays. You can simply retweet those from @PrepareAthon.



- Appoint someone on your staff to manage and monitor your social media outreach.
- Use the #PrepareAthon hashtag and the www.ready.gov/prepare URL in your posts where relevant.

SAMPLE TWEETS

The following are a set of sample Tweets you can use to promote America's PrepareAthon!, as well as engage participation and gauge interest in your own PrepareAthon event. Be sure to tag your Twitter messages with #PrepareAthon to promote the campaign. There are also short URL addresses created in these tweets. To see the full URL address and the specific site, view Table 1.0 on page 22.

Flood

- Avoid the rushing water! You can get rid of the situation all together by preparing now! #PrepareAthon 1.usa.gov/1skl9DN
- #TriviaTuesday: Anywhere it rains, it can flood. To be prepared for a flood, it's important to be ready to evacuate quickly. 1.usa.gov/1skl9DN
- Lack of flood preparedness got you down in the dumps? Never fear! #PrepareAthon has what you're looking for! 1.usa.gov/1skl9DN
- Are you looking for a better way to get prepared? Look to #PrepareAthon for your #flood-prep toolkit needs! Read more at 1.usa.gov/1nCL2wj
- How experienced are you in a flood situation? #CERT performs drills to ready the community! Read more at 1.usa.gov/1cowrMd #PrepareAthon
- Do you have a flood toolkit? Don't get washed away! Get prepared! Find your flood resources at 1.usa.gov/1skl9DN

Hurricane

- Do you have a communication plan for when the #hurricane passes? Make sure your family knows where you are! Check out 1.usa.gov/1nw9l9F
- Where is your #hurricane safe zone? Make sure your family has a meeting place for when the hurricane hits! <http://1.usa.gov/1kAKbLH>
- #PrepareAthon has the resources you need to prepare for a hurricane! Check out 1.usa.gov/1iYhKbK for more info!
- RT if you have practiced your family hurricane communication plan! #PrepareAthon has everything you need! 1.usa.gov/1iYhKbK
- Where will your loved ones be in a hurricane? Practice your communication plan with #PrepareAthon today! 1.usa.gov/1nw9l9F
- Practice your evacuation route, and don't get caught up in #hurricane panic! You can read more at 1.usa.gov/1iYhKbK #PrepareAthon
- Where is your evacuation route? Make sure you've got it down in time for the next cyclone! #hurricane prep here at 1.usa.gov/1iYhKbK
- Next time a hurricane comes around, make sure your belongings stay a-ground! Have a hurricane contingency plan. <http://1.usa.gov/1iYhKbK>
- Today, I will _____ to make sure I'm prepared for the next hurricane. What will you do? 1.usa.gov/1iYhKbK #PrepareAthon



Tornado

- #PrepareAthon is working to keep you out of the path of a tornado with alerts and warnings. Register today! 1.usa.gov/1iHcsyx
- Whipping winds don't stand a chance against these tornado tips! Check them out and get the #tornado info at 1.usa.gov/1i5BbyU
- Be sure that your family is safe and sound after a #tornado! Have a meeting place or #communication plan! 1.usa.gov/1nw9I9F
- Get your #tornado toolkit together today and register with #PrepareAthon for more info at 1.usa.gov/1iHcsyx
- Practice makes perfect! Make sure you go through the training for tornado preparedness! Check out 1.usa.gov/1i5BbyU
- Get your tornado warnings earlier when you register through America's #PrepareAthon! Get your info here at 1.usa.gov/1iHcsyx
- #SafetyTip of the Day: Practice what to do if a tornado strikes your community by getting involved with #PrepareAthon at 1.usa.gov/1iHcsyx

Wildfire

- Wildfires give very little warning! Make sure you're ahead of the game when it comes to #fire safety with #PrepareAthon 1.usa.gov/1njff4S
- Practice your #wildfire evacuation plan! You can turn to #PrepareAthon to know what to do and where to go! Read more at 1.usa.gov/1njff4S

Winter Storm

- Don't freeze in your time of need! Use #PrepareAthon to guide you through a severe winter storm BEFORE it happens! 1.usa.gov/Vq98iR
- Will you know what to do when a winter storm arrives? Make sure you've got the prep info you need from #PrepareAthon 1.usa.gov/Vq98iR
- Get on track with this #winterstorm preparedness guide! Everything you need to #prepare in one place with #PrepareAthon 1.usa.gov/1tyBE8
- Practicing #winterstorm preparedness is imperative for the winter months! Turn to #PrepareAthon for all your hazard info! 1.usa.gov/Vq98iR
- Do you know how to build a #winter storm preparedness kit? Turn to #PrepareAthon for dependable info! 1.usa.gov/Vq98iR
- There's always time to prepare! Make sure your #winterstorm toolkit is ready to go! Check out bit.ly/1tKAZjt #PrepareAthon
- There are a lot of things you can do yourself to prepare for a #winterstorm! Check out this video and get more information at bit.ly/1oo79Hn
- Don't let winter storms freeze your preparedness planning! Be ready ahead of time with #PrepareAthon 1.usa.gov/Vq98iR

Earthquake

- Prepared > Scared. Make sure you're prepared for the next big earthquake and the damage it may do! 1.usa.gov/1pc0O1P #PrepareAthon
- Make sure to secure all shelves and heavy stationary items if you live in an earthquake zone! #PrepareAthon 1.usa.gov/1pc0O1P



- Know how to locate your loved ones after an #earthquake! Make sure you have a family communication plan! 1.usa.gov/1pc0O1P #PrepareAthon
- America's #PrepareAthon is your go-to info source for free earthquake #preparedness information! Check out info here at 1.usa.gov/1pc0O1P
- Do your part to take part. Make sure #PrepareAthon is on your list to find earthquake preparedness resources! 1.usa.gov/1pc0O1P
- Make sure your #earthquake preparedness kit is ready to go! You never know when you'll need it! Get the info you need at 1.usa.gov/1pc0O1P
- Why do you need to be prepared for an earthquake TODAY? Watch this video at Ready.gov and find out! bit.ly/1kfq2gf
- What's your safety plan when an earthquake strikes? ALWAYS have an emergency plan for your family! Check out 1.usa.gov/1pc0O1P

ShakeOut

- Find out how to properly prepare yourself for an earthquake by participating in the Great #ShakeOut on October 16. bit.ly/1uXhJVz
- Become #earthquake #prepared and #ShakeOut any doubts about what to do by visiting bit.ly/1uXhJVz
- #PrepareAthon and #ShakeOut are teaming up this fall to supply you with the know-how on #earthquake preparedness! bit.ly/1l3K3Qq

Theme: Plan How to Reconnect and Reunite With Family Following a Disaster

- #PrepareAthon encourages you to take action to keep the family together post-disaster! Be sure you know where to get info. 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Start planning now with #PrepareAthon to connect with loved ones after a disaster! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Creating a family plan not only helps parents ease their mind, but it also keeps children calm. Check out 1.usa.gov/1nw9l9F #PrepareAthon

Theme: How to Be Informed: Know Your Resources

- #PrepareAthon has what you need to succeed! Make sure you know your alerts and warnings. 1.usa.gov/1kpwcXq
- Use the #emergency resources right at your fingertips! Register for America's #PrepareAthon. 1.usa.gov/1kpwcXq
- The most up-to-date prep info on #hurricane, #wildfire, #flood, #tornado, #earthquake, and #winterstorm is available at 1.usa.gov/1kpwcXq
- Skip the panic! Use #PrepareAthon resources so you know what to do in a tornado situation! Read more at 1.usa.gov/1i5BbyU
- Do you have the FEMA app? It's preparedness at your fingertips! Find more resources through #PrepareAthon
- Make sure you are using your resources wisely! Take a look at all of them through #PrepareAthon 1.usa.gov/1kpwcXq



Theme: How to Build a Kit and Have What You Need

- Flashlight? Check! Water? Check! What's in your tool kit for a #flood emergency? Get the missing pieces at 1.usa.gov/1nCL2wj #PrepareAthon
- Building a kit is one of the first steps to keep you and your family prepared during a #disaster. Help is available at 1.usa.gov/1qGR7qN #PrepareAthon
- Building a kit means being prepared for potential emergencies. Check out 1.usa.gov/1qGR7qN and get to kit building! #PrepareAthon
- Invite #PrepareAthon into your home by letting us help you create an #emergency kit. Ready.gov has the resources you need at 1.usa.gov/1qGR7qN
- Ready.gov and #PrepareAthon have the info you need to start building your emergency kit! 1.usa.gov/1qGR7qN



Theme: How to Be Prepared Through Practice.

- Learn from others' experiences! Check out first-hand videos of disaster survivors at 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8 #PrepareAthon
- So you know what to do in an emergency, but what about your community? Learn how to practice community drills with #PrepareAthon! 1.usa.gov/1kpwcXq Practice what you preach and learn how to keep your body and mind sharp in an emergency through hazard-specific drills at #PrepareAthon!

Additional Sample Tweets

- America's #PrepareAthon has the information you NEED! Don't get caught unprepared! Check out 1.usa.gov/1iHcsyx
- Where are you getting YOUR emergency alerts? Turn to #PrepareAthon for all your disaster warning needs!
- Register your commitment to be ready to act when disaster strikes. Are you in? Visit www.ready.gov/prepare
- Take part. Prepare. Join millions of Americans participating in @PrepareAthon. Register today at www.ready.gov/prepare #PrepareAthon
- Join a nationwide emergency preparedness movement! Register for #PrepareAthon to prepare for disasters in your community. 1.usa.gov/1iHcsyx
- Prep yourself before a disaster strikes you, your family, and/or property. Register for #PrepareAthon today at www.ready.gov/prepare
- Join the #PrepareAthon: Host or participate in an emergency preparedness drill near you! Find events or register at www.ready.gov/prepare
- Monitor weather alerts, decide how your family will communicate with each other, know your evacuation routes. #PrepareAthon
- Today, I will do _____ to make sure I'm prepared for an emergency in my city/town. What will you do? #PrepareAthon
- Make sure you're registered for the latest alerts and warnings! You don't have to be affected. #PrepareAthon 1.usa.gov/1iHcsyx



10 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE TWITTER CHATS

What's a Twitter Chat?

Twitter chats are planned virtual gatherings hosted in real time on Twitter. They're normally moderated, or guided, by one user to start a conversation on a certain topic. The chat is given a hashtag, such as #PrepareAthon, to make it easy for anyone to identify the chat and participate. Think about hosting a Twitter chat to share your emergency preparedness expertise and build excitement around your PrepareAthon! activities. Here's how to get started:

1. Choose a Topic

Start by thinking about which hazard is most relevant to your area and would have the greatest impact on you and your community. Next, determine who you want to participate in the conversation. For example, you may want to invite your employees and customers to join the chat. Think about specific topic areas to focus on, like signing up for local alerts and warning or collecting important documents to keep in a safe place.

2. Know Your Audience

Is your intended audience active enough on Twitter to carry on a lively discussion? If so, think about preparedness questions they'd find interesting to best engage them. If your audience isn't active on Twitter, it may be best to participate in other Twitter chats rather than host your own.

3. Pick a Date and Time

What date and time is your target audience most likely to participate? If your audience works a 9-to-5 job, then lunchtime or early to mid-evening may be the best time.

4. Register Your Chat With FEMA

Visit www.ready.gov/prepare for a list of upcoming national and regional Twitter chats that you can promote and participate in. If you're hosting your own chat, register your chat so we can list it on our website and help you promote it!

5. Promote Your Twitter Chat

Publicize your chat to increase participation. Publish the details on your website and social media channels. Be sure to include the date, time, topics, and #PrepareAthon hashtag.

6. Set the Format and Moderate

Think of your Twitter chat as a guided conversation with you as the guide. As the moderator, you can help structure the discussion by asking specific questions about a topic. Number the questions as Q1, Q2, etc. Ask participants to reply with answers using A1, A2, etc. For example:

- Q1: To prepare for a flood, what important documents should you have ready? #PrepareAthon
- A1: I have my driver's license, Social Security card, birth certificate, and kids' medical records and IDs in a waterproof box! #PrepareAthon

The Role of the Moderator

The moderator guides the conversation. As the moderator, you should have specific tweets and topics available to post during any lulls in the chat.

Pick a Tool for Moderation

Use HootSuite, TweetDeck, or another Twitter dashboard that allows you to publish tweets and follow the discussion by monitoring the #PrepareAthon feed.



Each question gets 15 minutes on average, and chats usually last approximately one hour. Decide on your Twitter chat topic and questions in advance so that you can promote them beforehand.

7. Use the #PrepareAthon Hashtag

If you host a Twitter chat, use #PrepareAthon as part of your branding.

8. Announce Chat Guidelines

Every Twitter chat has its own rules. The start of a chat is a good time to establish guidelines and the chat format discussed above. For instance, you might say:

- This #PrepareAthon chat is a time to discuss emergency preparedness. Please refrain from offensive language and product promotion.
- We have four questions: Q1–Q4. Answers questions using A1–A4. Don't forget to add #PrepareAthon to your tweets to be part of the chat.

9. Follow Up After the Chat

Thank everyone for their participation. Follow up with a summary of the conversation for those who were unable to join. And please share it with us at @PrepareAthon.

10. Evaluate and Learn.

Evaluate the success of your chat by the number of participants and tweets (include retweets, mentions, and favorites). Also, look at the total reach and impressions of your chat. At the end of your chat, ask: What would you like to see next time? Now, use that feedback in the next chat you host or participate in.

We want to hear what you have to say. Please share any results or feedback at PrepareAthon@fema.dhs.gov.

Activities to Promote the Twitter Chat

- Send invitations via Twitter direct message or email.
- Include the hashtag in your email signature block.
- Ask Twitter followers to retweet the invite.
- Advertise on other channels (e.g., Facebook, blog, website).
- Promote in traditional places (e.g., office lobby).
- Always include the time, date, and hashtag!



SAMPLE FACEBOOK POSTS

The following are sample Facebook posts you can use to promote America's PrepareAthon! Feel free to customize them to fit your needs.

- Be Smart. Take Part. Prepare. Register now to participate in America's PrepareAthon! and provide details about the activities you're planning. Share the steps you are taking to get yourself and your community prepared. Visit www.ready.gov/prepare for more information!
- Are you registered for America's PrepareAthon!? America's PrepareAthon! is a national, grassroots campaign for action to increase community preparedness and resilience through hazard-specific drills, group discussions, and exercises. #PrepareAthon www.ready.gov/prepare
- Save the Date! September 30, 2014, is National PrepareAthon Day! Join with communities across the Nation in events, like drills, exercises, and training, to learn what to do before, during, and after disasters. For more information about America's PrepareAthon!, visit www.ready.gov/prepare. Get Prepared!
- Communicating with your friends and family when a disaster occurs is important to make sure everyone is doing well. This is why having both an evacuation and communication plan is important. Have peace of mind when a disaster strikes and create your emergency plans. #PrepareAthon www.ready.gov/make-a-plan
- Today is PrepareAthon! It's a national day of action for preparing for fall hazards. Make sure that you're prepared for all of the fall hazards (can you name them?) and don't let this day slip through your fingers. Being prepared requires simple steps such as having three days' worth of food and water on hand. It can make a big difference! Learn what you can do to prepare yourself and your community. www.ready.gov/prepare #PrepareAthon
- Get ready for the America's PrepareAthon! National PrepareAthon Day on September 30. Visit www.ready.gov/prepare today to register and take action to prepare your community for tornadoes, wildfires, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, and winter storms.
- Knowing what hazards are likely to occur is only part of being prepared for them. Once the hazards are identified, know the risks associated with the specific hazard and the steps to prepare for their occurrence. Check www.weather.gov each day to find out if any weather hazards are expected in your area. #PrepareAthon



SAMPLE BLOG POST TEMPLATE

Posted by: [INSERT NAME OF AUTHOR/ORGANIZATION]

Join us for America's PrepareAthon!

This year was an important reminder to all of us that disasters can strike anytime and anyplace. Nearly every region of the country experienced some form of extreme weather event, including devastating tornadoes in Alabama and Mississippi, a 5.1 magnitude earthquake in Los Angeles, winter storms in the Midwest, scorching wildfires in Arizona and other areas along the west coast, and destructive flooding in Florida's Panhandle

As with many life events, preparation is the key to success. When you prepare and practice for an emergency in advance of an event, it makes a real difference in your ability to take immediate and informed action when it matters most. Early action can also help you to recover more quickly.

That's why thousands of individuals, organizations, schools, houses of worship, and local governments across the Nation are actively participating in America's PrepareAthon! (www.ready.gov/prepare), a campaign to increase individual and community preparedness and resilience through hazard-specific drills, group discussions, and exercises. This year, [INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME] is supporting this action-based initiative by conducting its own PrepareAthon! Day on [DATE].

Can't participate on [DATE]? Preparing for disasters is a year-round activity. So pick a date that works for you and register to be counted. And be sure to post your preparedness activities on the national calendar.

It's not a matter of if the next disaster will happen, but when. Start taking action and prepare now! Simple steps such as having a discussion and/or conducting a quick drill can help determine what you need to do next to become more prepared. Be smart, take part, and prepare for emergencies before they strike!



SAMPLE INSTAGRAM POSTS

- What would you do in a tornado? Be prepared and register for America's PrepareAthon! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Don't be swept away in tornado confusion! Keep your feet firmly planted and sign up with America's PrepareAthon! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Think of America's PrepareAthon! as your Oz. If you sign up and follow our yellow brick road, we are sure to lead you to proper tornado preparedness! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Flooded with so much preparedness information you don't know what to do? Make it simple and register with America's PrepareAthon! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Not sure what measures to take before a flood happens? Register with America's PrepareAthon! to get in the know! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Swimming in a flood of regret can be avoided if you sign up for America's PrepareAthon! We can give you proper flood preparation tips! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Hurricane season isn't over yet! Get prepared before it's too late and register with America's PrepareAthon! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Don't take a risk with hurricanes this season! Sign up for America's PrepareAthon! to gather tips on hurricane preparedness. 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- What would you do if a hurricane was headed toward your home? Learn how to protect and prepare your home this season with America's PrepareAthon! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- While you may know what to do to prevent wildfires, do you know how to prepare against one? Register for America's PrepareAthon! today and keep your home safe. 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Do you know how to protect your home and family from wildfires? Take the proper steps and apply for America's PrepareAthon! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Don't be caught in the hot seat and find yourself unprepared for a wildfire. Join America's PrepareAthon and get properly prepared for wildfires in your region. 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Earthquakes can occur at any time. Would you be prepared if one happened now? Register for America's PrepareAthon! today and stay one step ahead of disasters! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- It's best not to be shaken up after an earthquake occurs. Join America's PrepareAthon! to learn preparedness tips to keep you and your family safe. 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Earthquakes can shake what you thought to be a good preparedness routine. Find the proper ways to be prepared by joining America's PrepareAthon!
- Don't be left in the cold when it comes to winter storm preparedness. Learn how to be prepared for whatever comes your way with America's PrepareAthon! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Something as fun as snow can easily turn hazardous. Do you know what to do during a severe winter storm? Join America's PrepareAthon! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8
- Preparing yourself for a winter storm is more than about staying warm. Learn how to properly prepare you and your family by signing up for America's PrepareAthon! 1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8

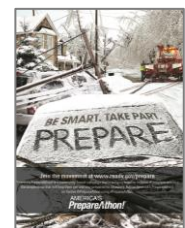




Table 1.0. Short Link Identifiers

WEBSITE/WEBPAGE	SHORT URL	FULL URL
America's PrepareAthon! Flood	1.usa.gov/1skI9DN	www.community.fema.gov/connect.ti/AmericasPrepareathon/view?objectId=3221360&exp=e2
Community Emergency Response Teams	1.usa.gov/1cowrMd	www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams
Ready Family Communications Plan	1.usa.gov/1nw9I9F	www.ready.gov/family-communications
Ready Communications Plan	http://1.usa.gov/1kAKbLH	www.ready.gov/make-a-plan
America's PrepareAthon! Hurricane	1.usa.gov/1iYhKbK	www.community.fema.gov/connect.ti/AmericasPrepareathon/view?objectId=3221328&exp=e2
America's PrepareAthon! Registration	1.usa.gov/1iHcsyx	www.community.fema.gov/connect.ti/AmericasPrepareathon/register
America's PrepareAthon! Tornado	1.usa.gov/1i5BbyU	www.community.fema.gov/connect.ti/AmericasPrepareathon/view?objectId=3221392&exp=e2
America's PrepareAthon! Wildfire	1.usa.gov/1njff4S	www.community.fema.gov/connect.ti/AmericasPrepareathon/view?objectId=3221424
America's PrepareAthon! Winter Storm	1.usa.gov/Vq98iR	www.community.fema.gov/connect.ti/AmericasPrepareathon/view?objectId=3229488
FEMA Emergency Supply Kit	bit.ly/1tKazjt	https://s3-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/dam-production/uploads/20130726-1513-20490-3927/e24x46_erkit.pdf
"Preparing for Winter Storms" YouTube video	bit.ly/1oo79Hn	www.youtube.com/watch?v=4KfmrR9drhc&list=UUVrYey5SZMidVZk9D8tYmA
America's PrepareAthon! Earthquake	1.usa.gov/1pc0O1P	www.community.fema.gov/connect.ti/AmericasPrepareathon/view?objectId=3229456
"The Day Before" Earthquake YouTube video	bit.ly/1kfQ2gf	www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkccyhoS4IE
ShakeOut	bit.ly/1uXhJVz bit.ly/1I3K3Qq	www.shakeout.org
America's PrepareAthon!	1.usa.gov/1tyyBE8	www.ready.gov/prepare
Ready.gov Family Communications	1.usa.gov/1nw9I9F	www.ready.gov/family-communications
America's PrepareAthon! Know Your Hazards	1.usa.gov/1kpwcXq	www.community.fema.gov/connect.ti/AmericasPrepareathon/view?objectId=3220272&exp=e1
Ready.gov Emergency Supply List	1.usa.gov/1nCL2wj	www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/90354
Ready.gov Basic Disaster Supplies Kit	1.usa.gov/1qGR7qN	www.ready.gov/kit

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- ²⁰ Number of national disasters in the United States from 1900 to 2014 by type. (2014). Statista. Retrieved from www.statista.com/statistics/236504/number-of-natural-disasters-in-the-us-by-type.
- ²¹ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. (2014, July 22). *Summary of natural hazard statistics for 2013 in the United States*. Retrieved from <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/hazstats/sum13.pdf>.



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